

Message Text

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17

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 DHA-02 IO-13 OMB-01 EUR-12 ACDA-07 SAJ-01

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R 302047Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6907

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 5674

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KN, KS, US, AR

SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO PANMUNJOM INCIDENT

REF: STATE 211862

1. INCIDENT WAS PROMINENTLY REPORTED AND WIDELY NOTED IN ARGENTINA, BUT IT IS VERY DOUBTFUL THAT IT HAS HAD ANY SIGNIFICANT OR LASTING EFFECT ON EITHER GOA OR ARGENTINE PUBLIC OPINION. THERE HAS BEEN NOOFFICIAL GOA REACTION, AND WHILE MEDIA GAVE EXTENSIVE WIRE-SERVICE PLAY THERE WAS LITTLE ANALYSIS OR EDITORIAL COMMENT.

2. WHAT LITTLE COMMENT WE HAVE HEARD FROM GOA SOURCES AND POLITICAL CIRCLES IS PREDICTABLE REFLECTION OF INDIVIDUAL POLITICAL VIEWS RATHER THAN ANY INDICATION OF GOA'S OFFICIAL REACTION. ARGENTINA'S CURRENT FOREIGN POLICY LINE AS REGARDS INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS WHICH IT FEELS DO NOT DIRECTLY AFFECT IT IS ONE OF NONINVOLVEMENT AND CAREFUL AVOIDANCE OF CONTROVERSY. IT HAS PROFITABLE RELATIONS WITH BOTH KOREAS AND HOPES TO MAINTAIN THEM. GOA TENDS TO SYMPATHIZE WITH SOUTH KOREA, AS IT IS ANTI-COMMUNIST REGIME, BUT IN ITS VIEW HAS NOTHING TO GAIN BY OFFENDING NORTH KOREA. THUS SOURCES TEND TO SHAKE THEIR HEADS OVER BRUTALITY OF PANMUNJOM ATTACK, AND SHRUG

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IT OFF AS JUST ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF RECOGNIZED HARSHNESS OF NORTH

KOREANS. USG REACTION TO INCIDENT IS CONSIDERED APPROPRAITE
FLEXING OF MUSCLES AND NOT PRELUDE TO FURTHER INCIDENT'S OR
WAR.

3. ONLY TWO SIGNIFICANT EDITORIALS APPEARED. LA PRENSA,
STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, EMPHASIZED BRUTALITY OF ATTACK,
CALLED AGGRESSION DELIBERATE, AND SAW INFLUENCE OF USSR AND
PRC BEHIND IT. LA NACION, ANTI-COMMUNIST BUT MORE MODERATE
THAN LA PRENSA, EDITORIALIZED THAT USSR AND PRC LIKELY TO RESTRAIN
NORTH KOREA TO AVOID DAMAGE TO POLICY OF DETENTE.

4. WE WOULD NOT EXPECT INCIDENT TO CHANGE OR MODIFY GOA POLICY
OR ARGENTINE PUBLIC OPINION ON KOREAN ISSUE.
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